

PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS

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Abstract

The educational professionalism has to deal with the complexity of contemporary society, which requires a multidimensional approach to individual and collective needs. The dichotomy between social and health education, implied by the current double-track learning and training academic system, shows its limits in the introduction of a disparity in social acknowledgment - mainly due to a lack in legislation, that qualifies as “enabling degree” only the one related to health professions - which is likely to reduce the guarantees of citizenship rights, besides going on weakening the educational professionalism itself.

An *integrated model of lifelong learning* comes out as a strategy in seeking a convergence between the two profiles, placing them in an organic project aimed to create generative connections between theoretical and experiential knowledge, transversal and specific, pedagogical and organizational skills, through which strengthen the value of educational social work.

Key words: educational professionalism, lifelong learning, acknowledgement, qualification.

Introduction

In the process of the formation of general norms and values, and upbringing leading towards tolerance and respecting differences, parents and teachers have a key role, expressed through their own democratic views and examples of personal conduct. The results from the

process of upbringing show continual success if they are in accordance with the parents and the classmates. In line with this, it has been stated in the Concept for nine-year elementary education that the school should create conditions not just for education, but also for the upbringing of the pupils. The educational development of pupils should be reflected throughout the curricula, the co-curricular and extracurricular activities and the overall activity of the school, as well as throughout the examples of behavior present at any time in school life.

Research Methodology

The nature of this research demands that different tasks varying in their origin be realized. In this paper, emphasis is placed on examining the attitudes of teachers about the effectiveness of the existent educational activities of the school in partnership with the parents. The separate hypotheses are confirmed in this paper, i.e. the teachers and the parents have educational needs for effective educational development of the students, as well as a necessity for strengthening the professional competencies in cooperation with the parents. The sample in the survey is exemplary, that is, the primary schools were included according to the availability for cooperation and research. The units in each school were chosen according to the availability of the researchers. The sample is exemplary, primarily because of the cost-effectiveness during the research (the schools were selected randomly from the municipalities - Centar, Aerodrom, Kisela Voda, Gazi Baba). The sample consists of 11 elementary schools in Skopje and 165 teachers who teach a certain subject from the third cycle of nine-year elementary education:

Table 1: Number of elementary schools and teachers

Nmb.	Elementary Schools	Teachers
1.	“October 11 th ”	15
2.	“Lazo Angelovski”	15
3.	“Grigor Prlichev”	15
4.	“Goce Delchev”, Gorno Lisiche	15
5.	“Krste Misirkov”	15
6.	“Krume Kepeski”	15
7.	“Dimitar Miladinov”	15
8.	“Naum Naumovski Borche”	15
9.	“Kole Nedelkovski”	15
10.	“Kuzman Josifovski Pitu”	15
11.	“Kocho Racin”	15
TOTAL:	11	165

Table 2: Opinions of teachers as to how much the parents are interested in the educational development of their children at school

1. How much are the parents interested in the educational development of their children at school (circle one of the given answers):	f	%
a) a lot	17	10
b) a little	120	73
c) not interested at all	9	5
d) other	19	12
TOTAL	165	100

Because this research has a qualitative and quantitative nature, the technique of surveying participants and the Likert scale were applied, intended for the sample of teachers. They were used during the examination of the attitudes of the teachers in order to determine the effectiveness of the existent education activity of the school, with the goal of further improvement of the quality of the educational component in teaching. The Likert scale for examining the attitude of the teachers consists of 13 open-ended and closed-ended questions and gives answers to: how much the parents are interested in the educational development of their children at school ; how much the parents are open to cooperation when it comes to strengthening the educational development of the children, and in what way the teachers collaborate with the parents. The results of the research are presented in percentages and charts in this paper, with the help of tables to display the results with attributive properties.

The question above is of a combined type. It can be seen from the obtained data (shown in Table 2) that the majority of teachers, and with a very high percentage at that, i.e. insomuch as 73,91% of teachers have responded that the parents are not very interested in the educational development of their children at school. These data lead towards thinking about the reasons why teachers have opted for this alternative. On the one hand, some of the teachers (11,97%) chose the answer "other", i.e. when opting for this alternative, the teachers actually quoted some of the reasons why the parents are not very interested in the educational development of their children at school) and at that, they state the following answers: "within the limits of their capacity", "sometimes", "a certain percentage of parents are either too interested or not interested at all", "they mostly don't want to face the problems", "it's a matter of individual interest depending on the parents", "it's necessary that they become more interested", "some individuals are more interested unlike others who aren't interested at all", "the interest differs from one set of parents

to another", "it differs with parents", "it's not the same with everybody", "they don't have time", "barely 10 parents come to a parent-teacher meeting for about 400 students". On the other hand, after analyzing the obtained data it can be stressed that only a small number of the participants (9,78%) believe that the parents are very interested, but another percentage obtained (4,34%) from the research sample should not be neglected either - these participants state that the parents aren't even remotely interested in the educational development of their children at school.

The results of this question refer to the following conclusions, that the largest section of teachers, i.e. 73,91%, think that the parents aren't very interested in the educational development of their children at school. When the percentage of 4,34% (the participants who have opted for the alternative: "parents aren't interested in the educational development of their children at school at all") is coupled with these answers, we can obtain a very high percentage (78,25%) of the participants who chose either of these two alternatives. The conclusions lead us to consider the fact that there are various reasons for this high percentage of 78,25%, which can also be observed from the answer "other". The teachers primarily single out the following ones : parents not having time because they're too busy, as well as the lack of interest in facing problems and helping their children solve those problems. When asked about whether parents are open to cooperation, the following answers were obtained:

Table 3: Opinions of teachers as to much the parents are open to cooperation regarding strengthening the educational development of their children

2. How much are the parents open to cooperation regarding strengthening the educational development of their children (circle one of the given answers):	f	%
a) a lot	17	9,78
b) a little	76	45,65
c) they are open but have no time to establish contact	71	43,48
d) they are not open because they do not respect authorities	1	1,09
TOTAL	165	100

Table 4

attitudes	fo	ft	fo-ft	(fo-ft) ²	(fo-ft) ² /ft
a lot	17	41,25	-24,25	588,06	14,25
a little	76	41,25	34,75	1207,56	29,27
they are open but have no time to establish contact	71	41,25	29,75	885,06	21,45
they are not open because they respect authorities	1	41,25	-40,25	1620,06	39,27
	$\chi^2 = 104,24$	df=3	p 0.05=7,815		p 0.01=11,341

Table 5: Opinions of the teachers regarding how they cooperate with the parents

3. How do you cooperate with the parents (circle one of the given answers):	f	%
a) at parent-teacher meetings	47	28,26
b) at one-to-one meetings	105	64,13
c) via written notices	3	2,17
d) differently	10	5,44
TOTAL	165	100

At the same time, it can be noted that with regard to this question, there's a statistically significant difference in the attitudes expressed by the teachers, so that's why the chi-square was calculated.

Regarding the question of how much the parents are open to cooperation in strengthening the educational development of children from the data obtained from this question, it can be seen that 45,65% of the teachers answered that the parents aren't very open to collaboration. These data go hand in hand with the answers received from the previous question where 73,91% of the participants consider that parents aren't very interested in the educational development of their children at school. The percentage of those teachers who have replied that parents are open, but they don't have time to establish contact is pretty high too (43,48%). If these data are observed and compared together with the data obtained from the previous question, we can see that when opting for the alternative "other", 11,97% of the participants in the research sample have stated the lack of available time due to being preoccupied as one of the essential reasons for how much the parents are(not) interested in the educational development of the students. It's also an interesting fact that a slight section of the participants (1,09%), which should be mentioned, have opted for the alternative: the parents aren't open because they respect authorities, which makes us think about the authoritarian style that might be used by them or might have been used by their parents.

With the next question of the Likert scale, we researched into the way teachers collaborate with parents. The data in Table 4 show that the majority of the teachers, i.e. inasmuch as 64,31% of the teachers have reported that they collaborate with the parents primarily during one-to-one meetings. On the other hand, 28,26% of the research sample pointed out that they

collaborate with the parents during parent-teacher meetings, whereas only 2,17% of the participants do that via written notices, while 5,44% do it differently. Therefore, the majority of the participants cooperate with the parents during one-to-one meetings.

Final remarks and suggestions

Due to the lack of time on the part of the parents, the family bonds are weak and this results in students not seeing their parents as persons they can rely on at home. It is for these reasons that children feel insecurity, and the absence of the parents is being compensated with the purchase of expensive things, computers, mobile phones, watches, etc. All of this leads to the formation of a vicious circle and the neglect of the educational component. Despite the lack of available time, which is a result of contemporary dynamic flow, the parents, as well as the teachers who are sometimes considered to be "secondary parents", need to find appropriate solutions in order for the students not to feel neglected, especially during puberty, a period of development which is of crucial importance for further personal development. It is a period which can lead to manifestation of aggression and waywardness in children.

The neglect of the educational activities of the schools has a negative impact on the accomplishment of the educational goals and tasks of the school and it presents not only a pedagogical, but a severe social problem. It is one of the reasons for the emergence of socially unacceptable behavior among the young population.

The recommendation for the authorities is to organize projects related to the educational development of students in order to strengthen and promote the educational activities of the school. It's necessary to collaborate with institutions dealing with such issues for these types of projects. Effective developmental planning is essential and includes positive qualitative changes in school life and work. This means that the school ought to be the initiator, promotor and evaluator of its own development and all the activities should be in line with the educational development of the students.

The educational institution (the school) should instigate and ensure the individual development of the students, to develop the students' awareness of their rights and responsibilities and to nurture mutual understanding and respect among the students. It should be the right environment for raising the personal system of values, and it should, first of all, be a healthy, safe and

stimulating environment for developing the individual values of the students. The schools should tend to the individual differences of the students and the employees, and create a healthy school environment and an effective educational development of the students, together with the parents, who should be the partners in the educational process.

Partnership with the parents can contribute to a, relatively speaking, "faster" educational development of the students on the grounds of mutual satisfaction and the creation of new models for cooperation with parents. This means that if the schools themselves succeed in their efforts to bring the parents closer to school activities, they will sooner than later be able to improve the school environment. It can be emphasized that each school ought to provide a stimulating environment for the students and the parents by motivating the teaching staff and the parents to expand the forms of collaboration with the school; by raising the "pedagogical" level of the parents and how well informed they are; by involving the parents in extra-curricular activities; by organizing seminars, panel discussions, workshops for the parents and initiating joint actions in the field of public and cultural activity.

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